



AMERICA  
RECYCLES  
2005

*It All Comes Back To You.*

# State Coordinator Tool Kit

---

**How To  
Gain Media Coverage  
for Your  
America Recycles  
Campaign**

# Contents

Introduction .....	1
About America Recycles .....	2
Tips on Getting Media Coverage .....	3
10 Steps to Organizing a Successful Media Event .....	5
Ideas for America Recycles 2005 Press Events .....	6
The Inside Story on Getting Proclamations .....	7
Writing Good Letters to the Editor and Editorials .....	8
Logo Usage Guide .....	9
Nonexclusive License and Usage Agreement .....	10
Pledge Cards .....	14

## **Sample Press Materials**

Letter to the Media Introducing America Recycles 2005 .....	15
Media Advisory for an Upcoming Event .....	16
Press Release Announcing the America Recycles Campaign .....	17
Press Release for Issuance November 14 .....	19
Press Release Emphasizing National Prizes .....	21
Press Release Announcing Proclamation .....	24
Letters to the Editor .....	26
Opinion-Editorial Piece .....	28

## **Appendices**

NRC's "How to Respond to Attacks on Recycling in the Media" .....	29
NRC's "20 Press Release Ideas to Promote Recycling" .....	33

# Introduction

This tool kit is designed to help state and local coordinators secure media coverage for America Recycles 2005, America Recycles Day and their associated events and activities. To assist you, we have prepared background materials, proven tips, and sample documents that you can easily and quickly adapt to your own state or locality.

We encourage you to create your own news releases and stories as they develop. Since America Recycles 2005 operates on limited resources, our campaign is highly dependent on people like you in the field who can capitalize on local press contacts for gaining coverage and other public relations assistance.

Our target audience, based on an extensive marketing study, is people in the 25-49 age group. This is not to say that we are excluding children and children's activities in 2005. However, since people in this older category are generally the purchasers of products that may or may not contain recycled content, our focus is to help them easily understand why to make the choice to buy recycled.

If you're planning to secure some local sponsorship dollars, please be sure that your sponsors get a copy of the Nonexclusive License and Logo Usage Agreement found on Page 10. Questions regarding the agreement's use should be referred to the National Program Coordinator.

We hope that you find the information in this tool kit useful for America Recycles 2005 and look forward to a successful campaign.

AR2005 Board of Directors and Management Team.

# About America Recycles

In 2004, the name of America Recycles Day was changed to America Recycles 2004 to help create the image of a progressive campaign. Thus the name will be updated each year to reflect the current year. By updating our name each year we continue to reflect the recognition of America's need to make recycling an everyday habit, while still using one day each year to draw nationwide attention to recycling.

We are a national all-volunteer, non-profit organization. Our goals are quite simple: to encourage Americans to recycle and to buy recycled products. Since our inception in 1997, our campaign has grown substantially. In 2004, residents in every state participated in the national America Recycles Day activities and signed pledges to recycle. This year's campaign is expected to involve millions of people in towns and cities throughout the nation and result in new commitments to recycle and seek out recycled products.

**OUR MISSION:** To hold an annual national awareness event to promote the social, environmental, and economic benefits of recycling and buying recycled.

**GOAL:** To increase the purchase of recycled content products and recycling throughout America.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR 2004 CAMPAIGN

- Nearly 200,000 people signed pledges to recycle and buy recycled products.
- Official resolutions and proclamations were issued by 127 local and state governments.
- 46 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands participated in America Recycles 2004.
- At least 916 events were staged to support America Recycles Day.
- National and local newspapers published more than 500 articles.
- More than a million bilingual bookmarks and 23,000 posters were distributed.
- President Bush declared November 15 America Recycles Day.
- Adult and youth prizes were awarded to eight winners selected from among the thousands who pledged to recycle and buy recycled.
- The AR2004 website had over 3,000,000 hits from September through November.

# Tips on Getting Media Coverage

**1. Real News Gets the Best Coverage.** The media prefers real news over fluff. When you are looking for coverage opportunities, try to focus on events or information that the media's viewers or readers will want to know about. In addition to straight news coverage, you can also seek feature stories. Features require a strong angle, but they aren't as time-sensitive as hard news. For some creative angles, see NRC's "20 Press Release Ideas to Promote Recycling" in the appendices.

**2. Localize. Localize. Localize.** Most people care more about what is happening with recycling in their community than on the national front. Try to replace national statistics with local numbers and national spokespersons with yourself or other local authorities.

**3. Follow Up.** Most publicity efforts lie on editors' desks unread because nobody bothered to call and "sell" the story. Reporters are inundated with news releases, press events and requests for coverage. This is a good case for the "squeaky wheel gets the oil" theory. Call and ask if they received your release, if you can supply any additional information and if they plan to use your story.

**4. Get Up Close and Personal.** When time permits, visit with the reporter or editor who covers recycling before you send any releases. You may try to arrange a breakfast or lunch appointment to discuss recycling and your organization. Paying for the journalist's meal is considered inappropriate so plan to go dutch when it comes time to pay.

**5. Be Available Any Day, Any Time.** Reporters are almost always on deadlines and often call shortly before a story is due. Be sure that any phone number(s) you supply on your release rings where you can be reached at all times. In most cases, the reporter will try only once and if he or she can't reach you, your story will wind up in the recycle bin.

**6. Go for Slow News Days.** Predicting slow news days can be difficult since one never knows when breaking news will occur. Observe your local media and determine when there is less news and target those days. In many markets, Tuesdays or Wednesdays are good days to attempt to gain coverage.

**7. Cut It Close on Advisories.** It doesn't usually pay to give media lengthy advance notice of news events. A two to three day notice is usually adequate. Be sure to follow up the morning of your event with a phone call to remind the targeted journalist and to determine attendance.

**8. Clear All Quotes.** If someone is being quoted in your release other than yourself, be sure to clear all quotes.

## Tips on Getting Media Coverage (continued)

**9. Seek Quotes from Recognizable Authorities.** It is a general rule that the better known a quoted source, the more likely the quote is to appear in the media. Ask for quotes or quote approvals from governors, mayors, council representatives and others who are frequently in the media.

**10. Create Your Own Media List.** Identify all newspapers, TV stations with news departments and news/talk radio stations within your market. Call and ask for the name of the journalist that reports on matters of the environment and recycling. Secure all contact information, including fax and e-mail.

**11. Distribute Through State Circuit Wire Services.** If you want to disperse a press release or media advisory to all major media outlets in your state, there are wire services like U.S. Newswire that can handle it for you ([www.usnewswire.com](http://www.usnewswire.com) or 800-544-8995). State circuit distribution typically costs \$80-\$125 for up to 400 words.

**12. Call for Help.** We are here to help you with media coverage. If you have any questions or we can assist you with an event or press situation, please contact us at:

National Program Coordinator  
America Recycles Day, Inc.  
1325 G Street, NW, Suite 1025  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202)347-0450

# 10 Steps to Organizing a Successful Media Event

**1. Simplify Your Message.** Identify one simple message that you want to communicate and that you can cover in one phrase. For example, “Millions to celebrate America Recycles Day tomorrow.”

**2. Select the Right Media Event.** Sometimes your media event alone can carry the day. For example, the governor may be appearing to endorse America Recycles Day. More likely you will have to “create” your event. For example, you could hold the event at an elementary school where every student is to bring something to school to be recycled or you can partner with a local store to highlight recycled content products.

**3. Pick the Right Time.** News staffs are usually light on weekends and after Friday deadlines, so stage your event Monday-Thursday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. if possible. If interesting visuals are part of your media event, aim for 5:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. and try to secure live broadcasts at the scene.

**4. Find a Good Location.** A location should meet two key criteria. It should be accessible to most of the media you expect to invite. It should help to reinforce your message. For example, a local landfill would be a good visual place to hold a media event about recycling.

**5. Compile an Accurate Media List.** You’d be surprised at how many media advisories are sent to journalists who are long gone. Try to get a list from someone in the market you know. Or select the media you want to cover your event and call to find out who covers recycling.

**6. Prepare a News Release.** Make your release short, clear and to the point. Most reporters will allow a maximum of 30 seconds for your news to leap off the page at them, so be sure you’re leading with your most compelling or interesting information.

**7. Distribute a Media Advisory.** Utilize the media advisory in this kit for maximum effectiveness. Deliver it by fax or e-mail two to three days prior to your media event, and follow up the morning of your event.

**8. Rehearse What You Are Going to Say.** It is important to “stay on message” so that what you want the public to know gets across. Try not to get sidetracked at the event.

**9. Arrive Early and Check Out Details.** Make sure everything is in place long before the media arrives. If Public Address (PA) systems are important, make sure they work. If props are integral, be sure they are there and they work. Be sure every reporter gets a copy of your release. Fax copies to those who did not show up.

**10. Follow Up and Evaluate.** Call reporters who attended and those whom you invited but did not attend. Ask if you can provide any other information. The day after your event, evaluate your coverage and critique the results.

# Ideas for America Recycles 2005 Press Events

Interesting events are more likely to secure media coverage. In years past, many participants in America Recycles Day have developed original ideas that led to extensive press coverage and positive public comment. Following are just a few ideas for you to consider. Most likely, they will trigger some very good ideas of your own. In all your press events, be sure that America Recycles 2005 also receives frequent mention.

**1. Down in the Dumps.** Hold a press conference at your community landfill to call attention to the massive amounts of solid waste that must be processed every day. Remind people that recycling helps to minimize solid waste while preserving precious resources, stimulating the economy and protecting the environment.

**2. Take a Can to School.** Arrange for a local school or school system to hold a “take a can to school” Day. Invite the press to meet at a large school where students will bring their cans to a central place to place them into a recycling container.

**3. Retail Recycling.** Ask a local retailer that carries a number of products made from recycled materials to allow you to hold an in-store press conference. Have as many products as possible available for the press to photograph and be prepared to discuss what recycled materials went into each.

**4. Recycled Paychecks.** Work with a local recycling facility to plan a press event to highlight the economic impact of recycling. Ask your local or state economic development department to provide you with statistics on the number of jobs and total financial impact recycling industries bring to the state. Hold the press conference by a conveyor of recycled materials.

**5. Fashionable Recycling.** Meet with the producers of one of your local TV stations to arrange a 3-minute fashion show. Purchase fashionable clothing made from recycled materials and present a fashion show for the TV audience complete with description, commentary and source of recycled materials.

**6. Recycle at Work.** Locate a large employer with an extensive recycling program. Work with the company’s officials to set up a press conference at which time the company will explain how and what it recycles and its impact.

**7. Recycled Treasure Hunt.** Solicit the help of a local radio station to hold a treasure hunt in partnership with a major sponsor. The treasure hunt will be built around recycled products with the winner receiving a prize made from recycled materials. Use the occasion of announcing the winner for your media event.

**8. Recycled Art Auction.** Hold a charity auction of art created from recycled materials. Award prizes for various levels of winners. Ask members of the press to be the judges for the event.



# The Inside Story on Getting Proclamations

Proclamations can give your local or state America Recycles 2005 campaign credibility by putting the weight of a local governmental agency behind it. While proclamations are quite common in many communities, securing them does take some planning. Here are the steps to assure that your celebration will receive official status.

**1. Who Do You Want to Sign It?** Generally, the higher the authority the better. Locally, the mayor is the logical choice. But if your governor or U.S. Senator is willing, he or she may be the better choice. Just be sure you select someone who is known and respected and who has media clout in your area. And be realistic. If the governor is a long shot, don't waste your time. Move on to someone you know is attainable.

**2. Allow Plenty of Lead Time.** Elected officials have busy schedules and may be slow to commit. Give them plenty of time to consider your request, and allow yourself plenty of time to move on to someone else if your request is rejected. Proclamations usually have to be vetted by staff.

**3. Call First.** A phone call to the appropriate representative of the person you want to make the proclamation serves two purposes. It alerts him or her that your request is coming in writing. And it gives the representative an opportunity to check scheduling and let you know the likelihood of success.

**4. Request It in Writing.** Assistants to political figures like written records of requests. Make your request clear, and include a copy of your proposed proclamation for review. (Get a copy of a sample proclamation from America Recycles 2005 website).

**5. Follow Up.** Give your request about 10 days and then call the representative to check on its status. If no answer has been given, ask when you should call back. It is important to be persistent without becoming bothersome.

**6. Get a Hard Copy.** Be sure to get a copy of the proclamation for use in news stories and promotions.

**7. Seek Press Coverage.** Ask the elected official making the proclamation if he or she would be willing to read the proclamation at a press conference on a convenient date.

# Writing Good Letters to the Editor and Editorials

In addition to seeking articles through press releases and events, there are two more ways to get your message in the newspaper: letters to the editor and editorials.

## Letters to the Editor

**1. Respond to an Article.** Letters to the editor can be rebuttals or comments on articles that appeared in the paper. If you are writing in response to an article, send your reply within 24 hours.

**2. Share an Observation.** While many letters are responses to something that appeared in the paper, not all of them are. You can also comment on what's going on in your community and how America Recycles relates to your observations.

**3. Keep Your Letter Short.** While letter lengths vary among publications, most are under 250 words and many limit letters to between 50 and 100 words.

**4. Stick to One or Two Points.** Since you don't have much space, stick to one or two key points. A well-crafted and focused letter is more likely to be printed than one that addresses too many points in too little space. See NRC's "How to Respond to Attacks on Recycling in the Media" in the appendices; it contains lots of facts and figures you can use.

**5. Include Your Contact Information.** Include your name, address, and most accessible telephone number in your letter. Some newspapers verify authorship before printing letters.

## Editorials

**1. Check the Opinion/Editorial Pages.** Check your local newspapers to see if they run opinion/editorial (op-ed) pieces written by local residents. Some papers do, some don't. If you see locally written op-eds, contact the editor of the editorial page to pitch your op-ed.

**2. Focus Your Message.** If you are invited to submit an editorial, you'll have more space than you'd get in a letter to the editor (usually 500-800 words), but you still need to focus your message on a few key points to be most effective.

**3. Problems and Solutions.** A common format for op-eds is to outline a problem and then advocate a specific solution.

**4. Localize the Issue.** Just as you do with your press releases, make sure you clearly connect the national America Recycles campaign to local issues, events, statistics, etc.

**5. Request an Editorial Board Meeting.** If you can't submit an editorial yourself, you can request that the editor of the paper promote recycling in his or her own editorials. Request a meeting with the editor and supply lots of details on the benefits of recycling. Remember to emphasize the local angle!

# Logo Usage Guide



*It All Comes Back To You.*

(a) Pantone Colors  
PMS 485 Red  
PMS 287 Blue



*It All Comes Back To You.*

(b) Four Color Process  
Red: 0c 95m 100y 0k  
Blue: 100c 68m 0y 12k



*It All Comes Back To You.*

(c) Black Logo



*It All Comes Back To You.*

(d) Logo reversed  
from a color



*It All Comes Back To You.*

(e) Logo with tag,  
minimum size



(f) Logo without tag,  
minimum size

The new America Recycles identity, or signature, functions best when the full color scheme, consisting of PMS 485 Red and PMS 287 Blue, is used. Two-color applications are recommended for all high-visibility materials. Approved positive and reverse applications are outlined below.

## Color Logo Usage

Illustration (a) shows the preferred two-color signature using the designated Pantone colors. Illustration (b) shows how to reproduce these colors when using four-color printing.

## One-Color Logo Usage

In one-color applications, the logo and tag may be printed entirely in a solid color (c). Or, if it provides better contrast, the entire signature may reverse white from any color field (d).

## Logo Size

Illustration (e) shows the smallest size that our logo with the tagline may appear (1.25" at its widest point). If the logo appears any smaller, the tagline must be removed. Illustration (f) shows the minimum allowable size for the logo without the tag (3/4" at its widest point).

# Nonexclusive License and Usage Agreement

This AGREEMENT made this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 2005, and is entered into by and among AMERICA RECYCLES DAY, INC. a Delaware non-profit corporation, having its mailing address at 1325 G Street, NW, Suite 1025, Washington, D.C. 20005-3104 ("Licensor"), and \_\_\_\_\_ ("Licensee").

## RECITALS

WHEREAS Licensor has rights to the name, logo, symbol, design, visual representation and components thereof of "America Recycles Day," a depiction of which is attached here as Exhibit A (hereinafter referred to as "Logo"); and

WHEREAS Licensee is \_\_\_\_\_; and

WHEREAS it is the desire and intention of the parties that Licensee be granted a non-exclusive license to use the Logo \_\_\_\_\_.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises herein contained, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto agree as follows:

## AGREEMENT

1.     Grant of license. Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Licensor grants to the Licensee, for the term of this Agreement, a non-exclusive license, without any right to assign, convey, or sublicense, to use the Logo throughout the United States for \_\_\_\_\_. All usage of the Logo by the Licensee \_\_\_\_\_ shall be strictly in conformance with the graphic standards set forth in the attached Logo Usage Guide and shall, in all instances, be accompanied by use of the <sup>TM</sup> symbol. Licensee expressly agrees to use and apply the Logo only to merchandise made with recycled content. Failure to do so by the Licensee may be considered a material breach of this Agreement by the Licensor and may result in termination hereof pursuant to Paragraph 2 below.
2.     Term

  - (a)     This Agreement shall commence on \_\_\_\_\_ and continue until \_\_\_\_\_ 2005.
  - (b)     Should Licensee fail to comply with any material provision of this Agreement, Licensor shall have the right, in addition to other remedies available to such party, to terminate this Agreement and the rights granted herein at any time. To exercise such right to terminate, Licensor shall provide to the Licensee thirty (30) days written notice

specifying such breach. Licensee shall have the right to cure the alleged breach within the thirty (30) day notice period. If such cure is made, this Agreement shall not be terminated.

- (c) Any termination of this Agreement shall in no way operate to limit any of the rights or obligations of the Licensor, either at law or in equity, or to relieve Licensee of its obligations which accrued prior to the effective date of such termination.
- (d) In the event that Licensee fails to comply with the requirements concerning use of the Logo or any other provisions of this Agreement, Licensor expressly reserves the right not only to terminate this Agreement, but to seek damages, including attorneys' fees and costs, relating to enforcement of this Agreement.

3. Payment: In consideration of the foregoing License granted by the Licensor to the Licensee, within fifteen (15) business days of execution of this Agreement by the parties, the Licensee shall pay a one time license fee for the term of this License in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Maintenance of Logo. Licensor will use its best efforts to register and maintain, or cause to be registered and maintained, the Logo as a trademark to enable \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Indemnities. Licensor assumes no liability for use by the Licensee of the Logo which may impair or infringe on the rights of any third-party. Licensee will not at any time knowingly do or cause to be done any act or thing in any way impairing or intending to impair any part of such right, title and interest of the Licensor, and Licensee hereby indemnifies and holds harmless Licensor from and against all losses, damages, and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred as a result or related to claims of third persons as a result of Licensee's use of the Logo.

6. Ownership of the Logo. Licensee acknowledges the representations of Licensor that Licensor owns the exclusive right, title and interest in and to the Logo. Licensee shall not in any matter represent that it has any ownership in the Logo or registration thereof. Licensee acknowledges that the use of the Logo shall not in any matter represent that it has any ownership in the Logo or registration thereof and the Licensee acknowledges that the use of the Logo shall not create in the Licensee's favor any right, title, or interest in or to the Logo.

7. Inventory upon termination.

- (a) After termination of this agreement under the provisions of Section 2, Licensee may dispose of articles which are on hand or in process at the time of notice of termination.
- (b) Notwithstanding anything set forth above to the contrary, Licensee shall not cause the manufacture of any Articles after the termination of this Agreement.

8. No joint venture. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to place the parties in the relationship of partners or joint venturers, and neither party shall have the power to obligate or bind the other party in any manner whatsoever. Each party represents and warrants that its execution of this Agreement has been duly authorized by all necessary corporate authorities.
9. Jurisdiction. This Agreement shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia and any legal proceedings relating to the subject matter of this Agreement shall be maintained in Federal or State Courts sitting in the District of Columbia. Both parties agree and consent to jurisdiction in the courts of the District of Columbia for any dispute arising hereunder.
10. Notice. Any notice, request or other communication required or permitted hereunder shall be in writing and shall be deemed to as been duly given if sent by certified mail, return-receipt requested, postage paid, to the parties at their addresses set forth above or to such other address or addresses as either of these parties may from time to time designate as its address by notice in writing to the other. All notices so addressed are effective when received.
11. Sole Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the complete understanding of the parties, and no waivers or modifications of any provision shall be valid unless in writing, signed by the parties hereto. This Agreement supercedes any prior agreements between the parties in regard to its subject matter, whether oral or written.
12. Binding effect. This Agreement, its covenants, conditions and provisions herein shall insure to the benefit of and be binding upon the parties hereto and their respective successors of the business of Licensor or Licensee. Any assignment of the Logo (or trademark thereof) by Licensor shall act as an assignment of this Agreement as well.
13. Partial invalidity. If any clause, sentence, paragraph or other part of this Agreement shall, for any reason, be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not effect, impair or invalidate this Agreement but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such adjudication shall have been made; and, in all other respects and particulars, the Agreement shall continue in full force and effect without modification.
14. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall constitute an original. Both parties agree that a signature on a facsimile copy of this Agreement shall be as fully binding as an original signature. Each party acknowledges that the person signing below is fully authorized to execute this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this document to be duly executed as of the day and date first above written.

WITNESSES:

ARD, Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_

AMERICA RECYCLES DAY, INC.

\_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Its: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Its: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pledge To Be A Recycler And You Could Be A Winner.



AMERICA  
RECYCLES  
2005

I pledge to renew my commitment to recycling in the coming year by:

- ☐ Buying more recycled content products
- ☐ Increasing my recycling efforts at home, school and work
- ☐ Participating in some other recycling-related effort: (describe below)

*It All Comes Back To You.*

### Please enter me in the random drawing to be held on or about December 15, 2005.

No purchase necessary. Your name and address will be kept confidential and you will not be contacted unless you are a winner. Entries must be postmarked by November 16, 2005. For a complete set of rules, visit the America Recycles website, [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org). One entry per person.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization or School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check here if you are under the age of 18  
(This information will not be sold or transferred.)

America Recycles is sponsored nationally by:



©2005 America Recycles Day, Inc.

## Pledge To Be A Recycler And You Could Be A Winner.



AMERICA  
RECYCLES  
2005

I pledge to renew my commitment to recycling in the coming year by:

- ☐ Buying more recycled content products
- ☐ Increasing my recycling efforts at home, school and work
- ☐ Participating in some other recycling-related effort: (describe below)

*It All Comes Back To You.*

### Please enter me in the random drawing to be held on or about December 15, 2005.

No purchase necessary. Your name and address will be kept confidential and you will not be contacted unless you are a winner. Entries must be postmarked by November 16, 2005. For a complete set of rules, visit the America Recycles website, [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org). One entry per person.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization or School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check here if you are under the age of 18  
(This information will not be sold or transferred.)

America Recycles is sponsored nationally by:



©2005 America Recycles Day, Inc.



## LETTER TO THE MEDIA INTRODUCING AMERICA RECYCLES 2005 OR LETTER ACCOMPANYING A PRESS RELEASE

*(Your organization's name and/or logo go here)*

*(Date)*

Dear *(Media Contact Name)*:

We have an opportunity right here in *(Community Name)* to join millions of people across America to make a difference. With your help, we can enlist an army of our friends and neighbors to join in an effort to preserve our natural resources, protect our environment, make our economy stronger and instill a sense of pride in the community. And who wouldn't want to do that?

November 15 is America Recycles Day, the culmination of hundreds of activities and events around the nation created to draw attention to the importance of recycling and buying recycled products throughout the year. This annual day of commitment to recycling is organized by America Recycles 2005 and its partners to see recycling realize its maximum potential in America. The state of *(Your State Name)* is a partner in this year's program and many of our cities and towns are joining us. But the success of the program is not up to government alone, but relies on individual commitment and participation by all of us.

The theme of this year's campaign is *It All Comes Back To You*. The multiple meaning in this theme is clear. By becoming an active recycler and seeking out and buying recycled products, you realize direct benefits through a cleaner environment and preservation of resources. At the same time, your recycled products and materials may show up back in your home or car or work in the form of brand new products at competitive prices to those made from non-recycled materials. Finally, it is up to each of us to recycle and buy recycled products. It's an activity that delivers benefits every time we participate.

We think this message and its accompanying activities may be of interest to your audience, and we hope you agree. In the next few weeks, we will be sharing additional information with you about America Recycles 2005 and America Recycles Day. However, if you would like more information now about local and regional plans, please contact me at *(your phone number)* or at *(your e-mail address)*. I look forward to working with you on this important effort. If we are successful, it will all come back to us!

Sincerely,

*(Your name)*

*(Your organization's name)*

## **MEDIA ADVISORY FOR AN UPCOMING EVENT**

**DATE:** (Day of Week), (Month), (Day), (Year)  
**TO:** (Name of Reporter/Editor)  
(Name of Publication)  
**FAX:** (Fax Number)  
**FROM:** (Your Media Contact Name)  
(Your Business Phone Number)

### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**WHAT:** (Clearly state the news)  
Example: Mayor Jones will announce the launch of America Recycles 2005 and local activities supporting America Recycles Day.

**WHO:** (List who is speaking and what they will talk about)  
Example: Mayor Joe Jones and Jane Smith, President of Citizens For Recycling Excellence. Citizens will be challenged to pledge to recycle and buy recycled products over the next year.

**WHEN:** (Month) (Day) (Year) at (Hour): (Minutes) (AM or PM)  
Example: November 8, 2005 at 8:30 AM

**WHERE:** (Location name and complete address; include directions if required)  
Example: Hilton Hotel, 100 West Main Street, Congressional Room, Mezzanine Floor, corner of Main and Elm Streets.

**CONTACT:** (Media Contact Name)  
Example: Sally Newsworthy  
(Phone to call prior to the event)  
Example: Phone 123-456-7890 (prior to November 8)  
(Phone to call during the event)  
Example: Phone 123-456-7899 (during the press event)

## PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING CAMPAIGN

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:

*(Contact Name)*

*(Your Organization's Name)*

*(Contact's Phone Number)*

### **(Your State) To Participate In 9th Annual National Recycling Campaign**

***— Millions Expected To Celebrate America Recycles Day On November 15 —***

**(YOUR CITY AND STATE) — (Release Date)**—*(Your State)* has partnered with America Recycles 2005 in its 9th annual campaign to encourage Americans to recycle and buy recycled products. As part of the campaign, people throughout *(Your State)* will celebrate America Recycles Day on November 15.

America Recycles 2005 is one of the most comprehensive recycling awareness campaigns in the nation. Each year millions of people become better informed about the advantages of recycling and buying recycled products as a result of the group's efforts. Last year, thousands signed or e-mailed pledges to recycle and buy recycled. Local and state governments issued proclamations and resolutions in support of the program. Nearly a thousand events were staged to support the campaign in almost every state.

"Recycling is a simple way in which all the people of *(Your State)* can protect the environment, preserve our resources and contribute to the economic well-being of the country," said

(*Contact's Name*) of (*Contact's Organization Name*). “We know that people throughout the state want to do something and just need to be reminded and shown how easy it is to get involved and do their part. It is always exciting to see how people in cities and small towns across the state rally around this important cause.”

“Recycling has been a priority throughout the state of (*Your State*) for many years, and we have met many of our solid waste goals,” (*Contact's Name*) added. “But we still have a long way to go to fully realize the benefits of recycling. America Recycles Day gives us an opportunity to re-emphasize recycling and buying recycled products. Hopefully those who commit to the program will carry it forward throughout the entire year as a result of our focus on November 15.”

This year’s campaign features the theme, *It All Comes Back To You*. The slogan presents multiple messages: a recycled product or material can return to consumers as another new product; recycling comes back to consumers as an improved environment, preservation of resources and economic well-being of the country; and it is everyone’s responsibility to recycle.

America Recycles 2005 maintains a website at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org) where you can go for information about events in your community, to sign an online pledge to recycle and to learn more about this year’s campaign and statewide activities.

#### **ABOUT AMERICA RECYCLES 2005**

America Recycles Day, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, which sponsors the annual America Recycles 2005 campaign. America Recycles Day, Inc. is sponsored by Ford Motor Company, Recycle America Alliance, Staples, Inc., American Beverage Association, Novelis Corporation, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

# # #

## PRESS RELEASE FOR NOVEMBER 14

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:

*(Contact Name)*

*(Your Organization's Name)*

*(Contact's Phone Number)*

### **(Your State) Celebrates America Recycles Day Tomorrow**

**— *Thousands Plan to Participate in Events and Activities Throughout the State* —**

**(YOUR CITY AND STATE)—(Release Date)—**Recycling will be the focus

tomorrow throughout *(Your State)* as thousands celebrate America Recycles Day. The state is joining the rest of the nation in the annual campaign to encourage Americans to recycle and buy recycled products.

*(Your Organization)* has been working with local coordinators throughout *(Your State)* to plan programs that invite a broad spectrum of citizens to get involved and commit to the program. One special feature of the effort is the opportunity to sign a personal pledge to recycle. The pledge form can be picked up at several participating organizations, or pledges can be made online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org). All pledges will be entered into a random drawing for a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV and several youth prizes.

America Recycles 2005 is one of the most comprehensive recycling awareness campaigns in the nation. Each year millions of people become better informed about the advantages of

recycling at home and buying recycled products as a result of the group's efforts. Last year, thousands signed or e-mailed pledges to recycle and buy recycled. Local and state governments issued proclamations and resolutions in support of the program. Hundreds of events were staged to support the campaign in almost every state.

"We expect thousands of people throughout (*Your State*) to sign pledges, come to events and rally around the recycling campaign," said (*Contact's Name*) of (*Contact's Organization Name*). "Many people are already active recyclers and constantly look for recycled products when they shop. But for recycling to really make a difference we need to involve thousands more. Tomorrow is an opportunity for us to do just that as we draw attention to the events in many of our cities and communities. Recycling is a win-win situation, so we hope everybody will do their part."

This year's campaign features the theme, *It All Comes Back To You*. The slogan presents multiple messages: a recycled product or material can return to consumers as another new product; recycling comes back to consumers as an improved environment, preservation of resources and economic well-being of the country; and it is everyone's responsibility to recycle.

America Recycles 2005 maintains a website at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org) where you can go for information about events in your community, to sign an online pledge to recycle and to learn more about tomorrow's statewide activities.

#### **ABOUT AMERICA RECYCLES 2005**

America Recycles Day, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, which sponsors the annual America Recycles 2005 campaign. America Recycles Day, Inc. is sponsored by Ford Motor Company, Recycle America Alliance, Staples, Inc., Novelis Corporation, American Beverage Association, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

## PRESS RELEASE EMPHASIZING NATIONAL PRIZES

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:

*(Contact Name)*

*(Name of Your Organization)*

*(Contact Phone Number)*

### **Someone in (Your State) Can Win a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV**

**— *To Enter, Just Promise to Recycle and Buy Recycled* —**

**(YOUR CITY AND STATE)—(Release Date)**—Some lucky recycler is going to win a Ford Escape Hybrid, the first vehicle to combine SUV capability with the outstanding fuel economy and low environmental impact of a full hybrid. The vehicle is being awarded by America Recycles 2005 as part of its 9th annual campaign to encourage Americans to recycle and buy recycled products.

*(Your State)* is partnering with the national group in its campaign and is encouraging communities throughout the state to stage events and activities to call attention to the importance of recycling and recycled products.

According to *(Contact's Name)* of *(Your Organization's Name)*, entering the contest is just another reason to commit to recycling. "Recycling is a personal commitment we all need to make," *(she/he)* said. "But if you make your commitment official by sending your pledge by mail or pledging online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org) stating how you plan to do more for the nation's recycling efforts, you may win a Ford Focus Hybrid SUV. Your pledge will be collected

with others and a winner will be drawn in mid-December.” Entrants must be at least 18 years of age to qualify for the Grand Prize drawing.

The recycling campaign is also awarding prizes to those under 18. The “Youth Grand Prizes” are five Trek Model 4300 24-speed bicycles made from recycled aluminum. As with the Ford Escape Hybrid, entry is gained by pledging to recycle and buy recycled.

America Recycles 2005 is one of the most comprehensive recycling awareness campaigns in the nation. Each year millions of people become better informed about the advantages of recycling and buying recycled products as a result of the group’s efforts. Last year, thousands signed pledges to recycle and buy recycled. Local and state governments issued proclamations and resolutions in support of the program. Hundreds of events were staged to support the campaign in almost every state.

“We’ve found that people take their signed recycling pledges seriously,” said (*Contact’s Name*). “Once they sign their pledge to recycle and buy recycled, they feel more committed to the program and to doing their part. The prizes we give away through random drawings are just an additional incentive to do the right thing.”

America Recycles 2005 was formerly known as America Recycles Day. However, in 2004 the group changed its name in order to stress the importance of making recycling a year-round effort. The group continues to focus many of its activities and events on a single day and has designated November 15 as this year’s America Recycles Day. (*Your State*) will also observe America Recycles Day on that date.

America Recycles 2005 maintains a website at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org) where you can register to win, find information about events in your community, sign an online pledge to recycle, and learn more about this year’s campaign.



## **ABOUT AMERICA RECYCLES 2005**

America Recycles Day, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, which sponsors the annual America Recycles 2005 campaign. America Recycles Day, Inc. is sponsored by Ford Motor Company, Recycle America Alliance, Novelis Corporation, Staples, Inc., American Beverage Association, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

# # #

## PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING PROCLAMATION

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:

*(Contact Name)*

*(Your Organization's Name)*

*(Contact's Phone Number)*

### **(Official's Name) Proclaims November 15 America Recycles Day**

**— *Citizens Encouraged to Participate in Annual Commitment to Recycling* —**

**(YOUR CITY AND STATE) — (Release Date)—***(Official's Name)* today proclaimed November 15 as America Recycles Day in *(Name of State or Locality)*. In the proclamation, *(Official's Name)* encouraged every citizen to take a few minutes on that day to commit to recycling and buying recycled products whenever they can. *(Name Of State Or Locality)* will be joining the rest of the nation in the annual campaign.

“Recycling protects our environment, is a wise use of our natural resources, and supports the economic well-being of our nation,” *(Official's Name)* said. “And it’s everyone’s responsibility to do your part in whatever way you can. It can be as simple as remembering to drop your soft drink container in a recycle bin. Or asking about recycled products when you shop. Every small effort combines with others to make a big difference.”

One unique feature of the campaign is the opportunity for people to sign a personal pledge to recycle. The pledge forms can be picked up at several participating organizations or pledges can be made online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org). All pledges will be entered into a random drawing for a new Ford Escape Hybrid SUV and several youth prizes. *(Official's Name)* encouraged citizens to sign the pledges.

“I have already signed my pledge to recycle,” (*Official’s Name*) added. “And I know it makes me feel responsible to make good on that pledge whenever I have the opportunity. So I hope many of you will sign pledges too. The combination of millions of Americans making a commitment can deliver huge benefits to all of us.”

America Recycles 2005 is one of the most comprehensive recycling awareness campaigns in the nation. Each year millions of people become better informed about the advantages of recycling at home and buying recycled products as a result of the group’s efforts. Last year, thousands signed or e-mailed pledges to recycle and buy recycled. Local and state governments issued proclamations and resolutions in support of the program. Hundreds of events were staged to support the campaign in almost every state.

This year’s campaign features the theme, *It All Comes Back To You*. The slogan presents multiple messages: a recycled product or material can return to consumers as another new product; recycling comes back to consumers as an improved environment, preservation of resources and economic well-being of the country; and it is everyone’s responsibility to recycle.

America Recycles 2005 maintains a website at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org) where you can go for information about events in your community, to sign an online pledge to recycle and to learn more about tomorrow’s activities.

#### **ABOUT AMERICA RECYCLES 2005**

America Recycles Day, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, which sponsors the annual America Recycles 2005 campaign. America Recycles Day, Inc. is sponsored by Ford Motor Company, Recycle America Alliance, Novelis Corporation, Staples, Inc., American Beverage Association, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

# # #

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ***Emphasizing the Environmental Angle***

Dear Editor,

On November 15, Americans will celebrate America Recycles Day. Recycling is a simple way in which everyone in *(Your State or Community)* can protect the environment, preserve our natural resources, and contribute to the economic well-being of our nation. When manufacturers make new products out of the materials we recycle, they reduce the water and air pollution normally created and they save energy. For example, it takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than it does to make it from raw materials.

Every little bit helps. I invite everyone in *(Your State or Community)* to renew his or her commitment to recycling and buying recycled products this year. If you fill out a pledge form at *(insert event name, location, date, time)* or online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org), you'll be entered into a national drawing for a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV!

(Your Name)

(Title, Organization)

(City, State)

### ***Emphasizing the Economic Angle***

Dear Editor,

On November 15, Americans will celebrate America Recycles Day. Recycling is a simple way in which everyone in *(Your State or Community)* can protect the environment, preserve our natural resources, and contribute to the economic well-being of our nation. According to the National Recycling Coalition, the recycling industry is comparable in size to the auto and truck manufacturing industry. That's a lot of jobs! By recycling, we help keep or even create jobs in our communities.

Every little bit helps. I invite everyone in *(Your State or Community)* to renew his or her commitment to recycling and buying recycled products this year. If you fill out a pledge form at *(insert event name, location, date, time)* or online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org), you'll be entered into a national drawing for a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV!

(Your Name)

(Title, Organization)

(City, State)

### ***Emphasizing Opportunity to Do More***

Dear Editor,

On November 15, Americans will celebrate America Recycles Day. Recycling is a simple way in which everyone in *(Your State or Community)* can protect the environment, preserve our natural resources, and contribute to the economic well-being of our nation.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, many easily recycled materials are still thrown away. For example, 78% of glass containers, 60% of aluminum cans, 41% of steel cans, 45% of paper and paperboard containers and packaging are not currently recycled. Demand for these recyclable materials has never been greater and, in many cases, manufacturers aren't getting all the recyclables they can use.

Every little bit helps. I invite everyone in *(Your State or Community)* to renew his or her commitment to recycling and buying recycled products this year. If you fill out a pledge form at *(insert event name, location, date, time)* or online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org), you'll be entered into a national drawing for a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV!

(Your Name)  
(Title, Organization)  
(City, State)

### ***Emphasizing Buying Recycled Products***

Dear Editor,

On November 15, Americans will celebrate America Recycles Day. Recycling is a simple way in which everyone in *(Your State or Community)* can protect the environment, preserve our natural resources, and contribute to the economic well-being of our nation.

Recycling our containers and papers is a great start, but each of us can close the recycling loop by buying recycled products too, at home and at work. When you look at products and the packaging they are in, favor the ones that clearly state on the label how much recycled materials they contain.

Every little bit helps. I invite everyone in *(Your State or Community)* to renew his or her commitment to recycling and buying recycled products this year. If you fill out a pledge form at *(insert event name, location, date, time)* or online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org), you'll be entered into a national drawing for a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV!

(Your Name)  
(Title, Organization)  
(City, State)

## Opinion-Editorial Piece

*We suggest adding local statistics and information to this op-ed where possible.*

On November 15, Americans will celebrate America Recycles Day. Recycling is a simple way in which everyone in (*Your State or Community*) can protect the environment, preserve our natural resources, and contribute to the economic well-being and security of our nation.

Recycling protects the environment in many ways. When manufacturers make new products out of the materials we recycle, they reduce the water and air pollution normally created by the process. For instance, recycled paper supplies more than 37% of the raw materials used to make new paper products in the U.S. Without recycling, more trees would be cut down.

Recycling also saves energy. For example, it takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than it does to make it from raw materials. Making recycled steel saves 60%, recycled newspaper 40%, recycled plastics 70%, and recycled glass 40%. Saving energy and conserving other natural resources have become issues of national security.

The WorldWatch Institute estimates that brutal wars over natural resources, including timber and minerals, have killed or displaced more than 20 million people and are raising at least \$12 billion a year for rebels, warlords, and repressive governments. Recycling eases the demand for natural resources and therefore can help create more stability around the world.

Recycling contributes to our economy as well by creating more jobs than throwing recyclables in the trash. According to the National Recycling Coalition, recycling creates four jobs for every one job created in the waste management and disposal industries. In fact, the recycling industry is comparable in size to the auto and truck manufacturing industry. Recycling creates 1.1 million U.S. jobs, \$236 billion in gross annual sales and \$37 billion in annual payrolls.

When our government agencies invest in local recycling programs, it pays great dividends by creating private sector jobs. For every job collecting recyclables, there are 26 jobs in processing the materials and manufacturing them into new products. By recycling, we help keep these manufacturing jobs in our communities.

Many of us have been recycling for a long time, and it may seem like we are doing all we can. But the reality is quite different. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, many easily recycled materials are still thrown away. For example, 78% of glass containers, 60% of aluminum cans, 41% of steel cans, 45% of paper and paperboard containers and packaging are not currently recycled. And it's not because there's no place for the materials to go. Demand for these recyclable materials has never been greater and, in many cases, manufacturers aren't getting all the recyclables they can use.

Please do your part to ensure that we all reap the many benefits of recycling. To renew your commitment to recycling and buying recycled products this year, you can complete a pledge form at (*insert event name, location, date, time*) or online at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org). Adults who make the pledge will be entered into a national drawing for a Ford Escape Hybrid SUV and kids under 18 could win a new Trek bicycle. Every little bit helps, and it all comes back to us.



**National Recycling Coalition**  
1325 G Street NW  
Suite 1025  
Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: (202) 347-0450  
Fax: (202) 347-0449  
[www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org)

This guide is part  
of NRC's Media  
Advocacy Toolkit  
for Recycling.

Also See:

"20 Press Release Ideas  
to Promote Recycling"

The "Recycling in  
the Media" Bulletin  
Board in the  
Members-Only  
Section of  
NRC's website at  
[www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org).

*The National Recycling Coalition is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement and improvement of recycling, and also source reduction, composting and reuse, by providing technical information, education, training, outreach and advocacy services to its members in order to conserve resources and benefit the environment.*

# How to Respond to Attacks on Recycling in the Media

Whether it's by national newspapers, network TV, or conservative think tanks, attacking recycling is a popular way to make headlines. But as recycling professionals know, the overwhelming majority of these attacks are based either on oversimplifications of complex environmental issues or on political philosophies out of step with mainstream America.

The sound bites are hard to beat: Recycling is a waste. There is no landfill crisis. Recycling doesn't save trees. These statements are both short and provocative—in other words, perfect for the news media. The idea of bashing recycling is so compelling that "the evils of recycling mania" was even used as an example of how to get publicity by being contrarian in Jay Levenson's popular "Guerilla Marketing" series.

As tempting as it is to draft a long letter with statistics and anecdotes to counter every negative point made about recycling, the reality is that long letters to the editor rarely get printed. So how can a recycling advocate respond?

With this guide, the NRC recommends a five-part strategy to respond nationally and locally to attacks on recycling. Since most decisions about recycling programs are made at the local level, we suggest that you spend most of your energy responding locally, even to national attacks.

We also offer some sound bites of our own in response to ten of the most frequent attacks on recycling. Use them in your letters to the editor, talking points for interviews with reporters, speech notes for local leaders, and handouts for the general public. Help recycling advocates in your community help you protect your program by arming them with the facts.

## A Five-Step Approach to Defend Recycling

### 1. Respond to the source.

Send letters to the editor for print pieces and to the producers for radio and TV spots. If you want your letter to be printed, it must be short and to the point. While letter lengths vary among publications, most are between 50 and 100 words. That's not much space, so stick to one or two key points. A well-crafted and focused letter is more likely to be printed than one that addresses too many points in too little space.

If you don't expect your letter to be printed and are writing to educate the editor or producer instead, suggest some positive story angles in addition to correcting inaccuracies in previous stories (see NRC's "20 Press Release Ideas to Promote Recycling"). Remember, anti-recycling messages make the news because they are contrarian or counterintuitive. Try to use this motivation to your advantage by coming up with a surprising twist or unique angle. Also think of ways that recycling could be related to other hot news stories (e.g., global warming, the economy, elections, etc.).

### 2. Give rebuttals to local opinion leaders.

Don't wait for the people who make decisions about your local recycling program to ask about the points made in an anti-recycling article. Supply them with brief responses to the main points in the article. Share anecdotes and statistics from your community program that show the benefits



**The National Recycling Coalition**



of recycling to your community. The longer you wait to provide positive information, the longer your decisionmakers have to wonder about the legitimacy of the negative articles. Prepare this material now so you can respond immediately after the next negative story appears.

### 3. Respond to copycat local critics.

Stories in major national newspapers (e.g., the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, and Wall Street Journal) are often reprinted in regional newspapers a day or two later. Local columnists often pick up national stories and write their own articles. Respond to the copycats by following steps #1 and #2.

### 4. Generate positive publicity for recycling.

To generate positive publicity, you have to get writers and editors interested in the story. Sending press releases to local writers and editors on a regular schedule is a common approach. New statistics, contests, freebies, events, awards, and links to national stories are all good ways to get media attention.

Send your press releases to specific people. When environmental articles or upbeat features on community activities appear in your paper, take note of the writers' names and add them to your mailing list. Staff writers can be reached at the publication. Freelance writers are often identified by the words "Special to (name of newspaper)" under their names. Newspapers will often provide contact information for their freelance writers.

### 5. Share what works.

If your letter to the editor gets printed or you convince a reporter to write a positive story, share your success with your peers through the NRC network. NRC has set up a "Recycling in the Media" bulletin board in the members-only section of our website where you can post your successes.

To access the area, login to the members-only section, then click on "Bulletin Board" under "Where Would You Like to Start?" and then on the forums under "Recycling in the Media."

## Responses to the 10 Most Common Anti-Recycling Arguments

When you write a letter to the editor or talk to a reporter, you rarely have the luxury of eloquently elaborating your points. Instead, you are required to fight sound bites with more sound bites. Many of the responses below will seem simplistic, but so are the anti-recycling messages they are meant to combat. The goal is to get your letter published, your sound bite on the air, and your points across. Shorter, pithy answers have a much better chance of being used than long, detailed ones.

- A recycled aluminum beverage can returns to the grocer's shelf as a new, filled can in as few as 60 days after collection, which tell us that the markets are functioning efficiently.<sup>J</sup>
- The steel industry recycles nearly 19 billion cans into new products each year, or about 600 cans per second.<sup>D</sup>

### Myth 1: There are no markets for recyclables.

#### How to Respond:

- Demand for recycled materials has never been greater and, in many cases, exceeds the supply currently provided by the American public.
- Rapid industrial development, particularly in China and other Asian nations, has created a huge surge in demand for recyclables.
- Domestic and international markets exist for all materials collected in curbside recycling programs, as long as they meet basic quality standards. In fact, there is intense competition among users for many recycled materials.
- The recycling industry is comparable in size to the auto and truck manufacturing industry. It's a large industry that demands lots of raw materials.<sup>B</sup>
- More than 2,000 companies are involved in plastics recycling alone.<sup>H</sup>

### Myth 2: We are already recycling as much as we can.

#### How to Respond:

- Many communities have achieved recycling rates of 50 % or more.
- Despite the challenges of steep hills and little storage space, San Francisco residents and businesses are recycling 60 % of their waste stream and are working hard toward a goal of zero waste.
- Many easily recycled materials are still thrown away. For example, 78 % of glass containers, 60 % of aluminum cans, 41 % of steel cans, 45 % of paper and paperboard containers and packaging are not currently recycled.<sup>C</sup>
- Many Americans focus on recycling in the kitchen, but forget about products and packaging consumed elsewhere, like in bathrooms, laundry rooms, and garages.
- Americans are increasingly on the go, and we can do much more to make recycling convenient in



public places, from downtown streets to shopping malls and sports stadiums.

- The national recycling rate is about 30 %. U.S. EPA has set a goal of 35 %.<sup>C</sup>
- We are nowhere near our potential, especially if manufacturers make products easier to recycle.

### **Myth 3: Recycling costs too much.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Well-run recycling programs cost less to operate than waste collection, landfilling, and incineration.
- The more people recycle, the cheaper it gets.
- Two years after calling recycling a \$40 million drain on the city, New York City leaders realized that a redesigned, efficient recycling system could actually save the city \$20 million and they have now signed a 20-year recycling contract.
- Recycling helps families save money, especially in communities with pay-as-you-throw programs.
- Well-designed programs save money. Communities have many options available to make their programs more cost-effective, including maximizing their recycling rates, implementing pay-as-you-throw programs, and including incentives in waste management contracts that encourage disposal companies to recycle more and dispose of less.

### **Myth 4: Recycling should pay for itself.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Recycling pays for itself in many ways, from the direct financial benefits of selling the materials to the many economic and environmental benefits.
- Recycling creates 1.1 million U.S. jobs, \$236 billion in gross annual sales and \$37 billion in annual payrolls.<sup>B</sup>
- Public sector investment in local recycling programs pays great dividends by creating private sector jobs. For every job collecting recyclables, there are 26 jobs in processing the materials and manufacturing them into new products.<sup>B</sup>
- Landfills and incinerators don't pay for themselves; in fact they cost more than recycling programs.
- Recycling creates four jobs for every one job created in the waste management and disposal industries.<sup>B</sup>
- Thousands of U.S. companies have saved millions of dollars through their voluntary recycling programs. They wouldn't recycle if it didn't make sense.

### **Myth 5: Recycling causes more pollution than it prevents.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Recycling is one of the best environmental success stories of the late 20th century. Recycling and composting diverted nearly 70 million tons of material away from landfills and incinerators in 2000, up from 34 million tons in 1990—doubling in just 10 years.<sup>C</sup>
- Recycling results in a net reduction in ten major categories of air pollutants and eight major categories of water pollutants.<sup>C</sup>
- In the U.S., processing minerals contributes almost half of all reported toxic emissions from industry, sending 1.5 million tons of pollution into the air and water each year. Recycling can significantly reduce these emissions.<sup>K</sup>
- It is important to reduce our reliance on foreign oil. Recycling helps us do that by saving energy.
- Manufacturing with recycled materials, with very few exceptions, saves energy and water and produces less air and water pollution than manufacturing with virgin materials.<sup>C</sup>
- It takes 95 % less energy to recycle aluminum than it does to make it from raw materials. Making recycled steel saves 60 %, recycled newspaper 40 %, recycled plastics 70 %, and recycled glass 40 %.<sup>C</sup> These savings far outweigh the energy created as by-products of incineration and landfilling.
- In 2000, recycling resulted in an annual energy savings equal to the amount of energy used in 6 million homes (over 660 trillion BTUs). In 2005, recycling is conservatively projected to save the amount of energy used in 9 million homes (900 trillion BTUs).<sup>C</sup>
- A national recycling rate of 30 % reduces greenhouse gas emissions as much as removing nearly 25 million cars from the road.<sup>C</sup>

### **Myth 6: Recycling doesn't save trees or other natural resources.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Recycling conserves natural resources, such as timber, water, and minerals.
- Every bit of recycling makes a difference. For example, one year of recycling on just one college campus, Stanford University, saved the equivalent of 33,913 trees and the need for 636 tons of iron ore, coal, and limestone.<sup>A</sup>
- Recycled paper supplies more than 37 % of the raw materials used to make new paper products in the

U.S.<sup>E</sup> Without recycling, this material would come from trees.

- Every ton of newsprint or mixed paper recycled is the equivalent of 12 trees. Every ton of office paper recycled is the equivalent of 24 trees.<sup>A</sup>
- When one ton of steel is recycled, 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,400 pounds of coal and 120 pounds of limestone are conserved.<sup>D</sup>
- Brutal wars over natural resources, including timber and minerals, have killed or displaced more than 20 million people and are raising at least \$12 billion a year for rebels, warlords, and repressive governments. Recycling eases the demand for the resources.<sup>K</sup>
- Mining is the world's most deadly occupation. On average, 40 mine workers are killed on the job each day, and many more are injured. Recycling reduces the need for mining.<sup>K</sup>
- Tree farms and reclaimed mines are not ecologically equivalent to natural forests and ecosystems. Recycling prevents habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity, and soil erosion associated with logging and mining.

### **Myth 7: There is plenty of landfill space, so why bother?**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Recycling's true value comes from preventing pollution and saving natural resources and energy, not landfill space.
- Recycling is largely responsible for averting the landfill crisis.
- The number of landfills in the United States is steadily decreasing—from 8,000 in 1988 to 1,858 in 2001. The capacity, however, has remained relatively constant. New landfills are much larger than in the past.<sup>C</sup> Who wants to live next to a mega-landfill?

### **Myth 8: Landfills and incinerators are safe.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Landfills can be major sources of groundwater pollution. For example, leachate from solid waste landfills is similar in composition to that of hazardous waste landfills.
- Municipal solid waste landfills are the largest source of human-related methane emissions in the United States, accounting for about 34 percent of these emissions, which are a potent cause of global warming. Paper decomposing in landfills, which could be recycled instead, is a major source of this methane.<sup>C</sup>

- About 20 % of the sites on the Superfund list (the nation's most hazardous sites) are solid waste landfills.<sup>C</sup>
- Burning garbage in incinerators and waste-to-energy facilities produces nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide, as well as trace amounts of toxic pollutants, such as mercury compounds and dioxins. Nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide contribute to smog and acid rain.<sup>C</sup>

### **Myth 9: If recycling makes sense, the free market will make it happen.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Scrap steel has become the steel industry's single largest source of raw material because it is economically advantageous to recycle old steel into new steel.<sup>D</sup>
- For glass manufacturers, recycling makes economic sense because it extends the life of furnaces and reduces energy costs. Energy costs drop by 0.5 % for every 1 % of cullet used.<sup>I</sup>
- More than 80 % of U.S. papermakers use some recovered fiber to make their products.<sup>E</sup>
- Unlike most public services, recycling does function within the market economy, and quite successfully.
- Government supports lots of services that the free market wouldn't provide, such as the delivery of running water and electricity.
- If the market were truly free, long-standing subsidies that favor virgin materials and landfills would not exist, and recycling could compete on a level playing field.

### **Myth 10: Recycling is a burden on families.**

#### **How to Respond:**

- Recycling is so popular because the American public wants to do it.
- More people recycle than vote.<sup>G</sup>
- Nearly 140 million Americans have access to curbside recycling programs.<sup>F</sup> Even more Americans have access to drop-off centers.

#### **Statistical Sources:**

(A) NRC's Environmental Benefits Calculator (B) NRC's Recycling Economic Information Study (C) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (D) Steel Recycling Institute (E) American Forest & Paper Association (F) BioCycle Magazine (G) Resource Recycling Magazine (H) American Plastics Council (I) Glass Packaging Institute (J) Aluminum Association (K) WorldWatch Institute

© 2005, National Recycling Coalition. All Rights Reserved.

*This guide is an updated version of a tip sheet first published by NRC in 1999.*



National Recycling Coalition  
1325 G Street NW  
Suite 1025  
Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: (202) 347-0450  
Fax: (202) 347-0449  
[www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org)

This guide is part  
of NRC's Media  
Advocacy Toolkit  
for Recycling.

Also See:

"How to Respond  
to Attacks on  
Recycling in  
the Media"

The "Recycling in  
the Media" Bulletin  
Board in the  
Members-Only  
Section of  
NRC's website at  
[www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org).

*The National Recycling Coalition is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement and improvement of recycling, and also source reduction, composting and reuse, by providing technical information, education, training, outreach and advocacy services to its members in order to conserve resources and benefit the environment.*

# 20 Press Release Ideas to Promote Recycling

Generating positive media exposure for recycling is a great way to reinforce support for your local recycling program and to remind residents that their efforts do make a difference.

You can encourage the media to cover recycling favorably by issuing press releases on suggested stories. In fact, it's a great idea to get in the habit of sending press releases to the media on a regular basis, such as monthly or quarterly. Using the 20 ideas in this guide, you should have no problem filling out a press release calendar for the year.

Remember to consider the complete recycling loop when developing story ideas. Think about collection, processing, manufacturing with recycled materials, and buying recycled products.

NRC's companion guide, "How to Respond to Attacks on Recycling in the Media" contains lots of talking points and statistics that you can use in your press releases.

## Press Release Ideas

Here are 20 ideas for press releases on recycling, in no particular order.

**#1: Environmental Results.** Use NRC's Environmental Benefits Calculator to add up the energy and natural resource savings associated with your recycling program over a set amount of time (i.e., the last quarter or year).

**#2: Energy Savings.** U.S. energy policy is a hot issue and stories about sky-high fuel prices and rocketing heating bills provide a great opportunity for you to explain how recycling saves energy and is an important part of the overall solution.

**#3: Recycling Trends.** Explain how your recycling program has changed over time. Are you recycling more or less of certain materials? Why do you think that is?

**#4: Profile a Recycling Business Owner.** Talk about the economic benefits of recycling in your community by profiling a recycling business owner. How many people are employed? What other benefits come from the company's work in your area?

**#5: Profile a Store with Recycled Products.** Does a store in your area supply an unusual amount or type of recycled products?

**#6: Use Specially Designated Days to Highlight Recycling Opportunities.** The second Monday in January is National Clean Off Your Desk Day, so why not highlight the importance of office paper recycling? Administrative Professionals Day (formerly Secretary's Day) in the last week of April is a good opportunity to highlight some of the recycled office products available in your community. And don't forget the most special day of all: America Recycles Day on November 15<sup>th</sup>! A promotional items company called AdSources has a great list of "special" days and months on its website at [www.adsources.com](http://www.adsources.com). Click on "Ideas."

**#7: Seasonal Tips.** Each season brings its own set of waste reduction issues, from yard trimmings in the spring to wrapping paper and Christmas trees in the winter. Offer your residents some tips on reducing waste and recycling more during each season. The U.S. EPA has tips organized by month at <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/specials/funfacts/index.htm>



The National Recycling Coalition

**#8: Recycling Milestones.** Has your program reached a particular goal (e.g., number of households participating) or milestone (e.g., certain number of tons recycled?). Review what it took to get to that milestone.

**#9: Recycling Anniversaries.** Celebrate an important anniversary in your program. How long has your program been in existence? How long have you been recycling various materials?

**#10: Focus on a Material.** Is one material in your collection program a shining star? Highlight that material, how much is recycled locally, and the benefits of recycling it.

**#11: Highlight the “Forgotten” Materials.** Do you collect a material that residents often forget about, like aerosol cans or magazines? Remind residents about any unusual materials they can recycle in your community.

**#12: Money Saved by Recycling.** Show how families or businesses in your community are saving money by recycling.

**#13: Plans for the New Year.** At the beginning of the calendar year or your budget year, unveil the plans you have for your program in the coming twelve months. Can residents and businesses expect anything new from your office?

**#14: Top Ten Lists.** Everyone loves lists. Issue a press release with the top ten reasons to recycle or the top ten ways to save money by reducing waste in your community.

**#15: Job Creation.** When layoffs are in the news, highlight the ways that recycling creates U.S. jobs. Use the data from NRC’s Recycling Economic Information Study.

**#16: Where Do the Materials Go?** Residents are always curious about what actually happens to their recyclables when they leave the curb. Trace the recycling trail from your community to processors and manufacturers.

**#17: Manufacturing with Recycled Materials.** What manufacturers in your area are using recycled content? Explain the role of recycled materials in their manufacturing process, where they get the materials, etc.

**#18: E-Waste Tips.** Everyone needs advice on what to do with old cell phones, computers, TVs and everything else electronic. Help residents figure it out by explaining their options.

**#19: Recycled Content in Cars.** Major automobile manufacturers are including recycled content in their cars and trucks. Go to your local dealership and highlight the recycled content on the lot.

**#20: Construction Site Recycling.** Are local housing developers or commercial construction companies implementing on-site recycling programs or using recycled building materials?

## Formatting Your Press Release

Reporters expect material to be presented in a certain way, so it’s best to follow the standard format. Below is a suggested template that you could use with any of the ideas in this guide.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**

Your Name and Title

Your Organization

**Office:** Your Phone Number

**Mobile:** Your Phone Number

Your Email Address

### Title of the Press Release

### Subtitle of the Press Release

**CITY, STATE (Month, Day, Year)** — Start your lead paragraph with the most important and interesting information and a “hook” that will grab a reporter or editor’s attention.

Follow with two-three short paragraphs that elaborate on the main points with additional details. Include at least two direct quotes.

Close with a paragraphs that offers more information: For additional information, please . . . (insert website or other contact info).

Your last paragraph should include an underlined heading and boilerplate text about your organization like this:

#### About XYZ Organization

Include a paragraph of background info on your organization, such as its mission statement, when it was founded, etc.

###

*(### signals the end of the release.  
Some people use -30- instead.)*

© 2005, National Recycling Coalition. All Rights Reserved.



AMERICA  
RECYCLES  
2005

*It All Comes Back To You.*